DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 324 068 JC 900 517

AUTHOR Arman, Hal
TITLE Preparing for Leadership Positions: A Report from the Field.
PUB DATE 10 Jul 90
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Annual International Conference on Leadership Development of the League for Innovation in Community Colleges, "Leadership 2000" (2nd, San Francisco, CA, July 8-11, 1990).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Characteristics; Career Change; *Career Development; *Career Ladders; *College Presidents; *Community Colleges; Leadership Qualities; Models; Promotion (Occupational); School Surveys; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

In 1985, a survey was conducted to investigate the career credentials of a group of community college chief executive officers (CEO's) and chief instructional officers (CIO's) from Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio. Study findings, based on a 69.6% response rate from both two- and four-year college administrators, included the following: (1) the top-level two-year college administrators surveyed were predominantly (89%) male, middle-aged (an average of 50.2 years), and white (95%) and 86% had doctoral degrees; (2) 28.9% of the CEO's followed a traditional career path, beginning with graduate training in a specific discipline, teaching experience, appointment as a department chair, and then being promoted to dean, vice president, and finally president; (3) 35.6% of the CEO's were first employed at a college in an administrative position and proceeded to the presidency with no teaching experience; (4) 11.1% of the CEO's started in K-12 administration; (5) 71% of the CEO's and CIO's came to their current job from outside the institution; and (6) asked what training, experience, or skills, they wished they had had, respondents indicated that they were better able to understand philosophical issues than operational issues (e.g., computers, budgeting, planning, and legal issues). (GFW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED324068

PREPARING FOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS:

A REPORT FROM THE FIELD

BY

HAL ARMAN
DELTA COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY CENTER, MI 48710

PRESENTED AT THE LEADERSHIP 2000 CONFERENCE

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

JULY 10, 1990

JC900517

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

X Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

H. D. Arman

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Paper presented at the Annual International Conference on Leadership Development of the League for Innovation in Community Colleges, "Leadership 2000" (2nd, San Francisco, CA, July 8-11, 1990).

While anyone in a college setting can be asked to take leadership responsibilities for a project or assignment, movement into high level administrative jobs offers, and even demands, many opportunities for leadership. If, therefore, you seek a leadership role in a community college, the best way to do it is from an administrative position that has major expectations built in.

The purpose of this forum is to discuss the career credentials of a group of community college presidents (CEO's) and chief instructional officers (CIO's) and to share their advice of skills and experiences they wished they had gotten more of along the way to their current position.

The data I will be sharing with you comes from a dissertation survey of CEO's and CIO's in the States of Michigan, Illinois and Ohio (Chart I). While the original survey included officers from two and four-year colleges, the data has been retabulated for this presentation to include only community college officers, with a single exception noted in the body of the presentation. It should also be noted that the survey was undertaken in 1985; however, it has never been published before other than in my dissertation. I think you will find much that you intuitively understand and agree with in the data, and I doubt that the age of the data will have much impact on the central points being made.

To begin, let me remind you that, if you look back to the early days of higher education in the United States, college administration meant essentially the college president. Initially trained for the clergy and generally selected from the faculty, college presidents handled college correspondence in longhand, registered and disciplined students, hired faculty and operated the college library. Gradually over the years as colleges grew and developed, administrative positions were created to do

CHART I

HOW STUDY WAS DONE

WHO SURVEYED:

PRESIDENTS AND CHIEF INSTRUCTIONAL OFFICERS OF 4 YEAR AND 2 YEAR COLLEGES IN MICHIGAN, ILLINOIS AND OHIO

RESPONSE RATE: 69.6%

INSTRUMENT USED:

MAILED QUESTIONNAIRE

the specific tasks of administration that we now recognize. The method of selection of college officers, however, remained very similar to earlier periods: selection of faculty trained in specific subject areas with little or no training or experience in college administration.

This approach to selection caused one college president when asked how he selected new administrators to respond, "I look for faculty members who answer their mail."

The traditional model of career progression in higher education (Chart II) had several positive aspects; however, it also had many negative implications for higher education:

1. College administrators often came to their first administrative jobs with little training or preparation. This led one critic to characterize higher education institutions as committed to training professionals, but led by amateurs.

2. An old boys' network developed at many colleges because there was no clear way to prepare for upper level administrative positions. Faculty simply waited to be tapped by an observant dean or vice president.

3. There was no real job market for those who did take any type of courses or programs related to college administration.

The rapid expansion of many colleges following Work War II, the creation of new colleges (particularly community colleges), affirmative action and

CHART II

TRADITIONAL VIEW OF CAREER PATH FOR COLLEGE PRESIDENCY

1. GRADUATE EDUCATION IN A SPECIFIC DISCIPLINE
2. TEACHING EXPERIENCE
3. APPOINTMENT AS DEPARTMENT CHAIR
4. PROMOTION TO DEAN
5. PROMOTION TO VICE PRESIDENT
6. PROMOTION TO PRESIDENT

opportunity employment laws, and the growth of university programs to prepare college administrators all helped to change the traditional model, or did it? How much has really changed?

Let's begin to look at the data (Chart III) from the survey by noting some of the demographical information about respondents. Note in particular that later surveys (particularly George Vaughn in Pathways to the Presidency) confirm that the number of women in these key jobs is increasing in a very solid manner. Also note that these findings confirm the trend toward top community college officials possessing the doctorate that has been noted in publications in the 60's and 70's. One of the key messages that people considering movement into a community college presidency or chief instructional office positions should receive from this data is that they will be at a serious disadvantage if they fail to complete a doctorate in an appropriate field. Finally, the only data reported here from four-year colleges and universities indicates that well over half of respondents from those institutions received their doctoral degrees in a specific subject area. The traditional administrative career model, particularly at the early career stages, seems to fit officials from baccalaureate institutions more accurately than community college officials.

As something of an aside, and because I can get my alumni dues paid for next year if I include that data, Chart IV shows the universities from which this group of community college leaders received their doctoral degrees.

In this study, each respondent was given five different career path

CHART III

DEMOGRAPHIC RESULTS

TOP LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS ARE:

1. MEN (89%) BUT CHANGES ARE OCCURRING
2. MIDDLE AGED (MEDIAN 50.2 YEARS)
3. WHITE (95 %)
4. POSSESS A DOCTORAL DEGREE (86%)
5. PRIVATE & PUBLIC 4-YEAR ADMINISTRATORS TRAINED IN SPECIFIC DISCIPLINE (64% & 76%)

CHART IV

LEADING DOCTORAL DEGREE GRANTING UNIVERSITIES OF RESPONDENTS

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY	23
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN	12
WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY	10
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS	7
INDIANA UNIVERSITY	6
NORTHWESTERN	6
OHIO STATE	6
HARVARD	5

models and asked to indicate which best fit his/her personal experiences. The models were devised from a review of the literature, and a series of preliminary interviews. The models fit all but 12% of the respondents. Chart V contains the career model data for this group of officials.

The most striking finding in Chart V is that the traditional career path model was followed by less than a third of community college presidents. Slightly more than a third were first employed in a college administrtive position and ultimately progressed to the presidency without teaching experience. While there were some presidents who started their careers in K-12 settings, this was not a common career pattern. Very few people came to top level positions in community colleges from outside of education.

The data does indicate that many high ranking community college officials did begin their careers as college teachers; however, there are clearly many other promising routes to top administrative positions as well. This data is consistent with a study of four-year administrative officials by Dr. Kathryn Moore of Penn State in 1983 in which she found that the traditional career model was too simplistic to explain the great variety of career patterns of her sample.

It is also worth noting that George Vaughn in his recent book (Pathways to the Presidency) found that about half of community college presidents came to their first presidency from the job of dean of instruction (the term he used for the chief instructional officer). His data suggests that academic administration is a very good base for upward progressions in a community college; however, this data suggests it is not

CAREER MODELS

A. TRADITIONAL MODEL

C. C. Pres.	C. C. CIO
28.9%	45.1%

B. ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS ONLY

C. C. Pres.	C. C. CIO
35.6%	29 4%

C. OUTSIDE EDUCATION

C. C. Pres.	C. C. CIO
6.7%	1.9%

D. START IN K-12 TEACHING

C. C. Pres.	C. C. CIO
17.8%	15.7%

E. START IN K-12 ADMINISTRATION

C. C. Pres.	C. C. CIO
11.1%	7.8%

N=96

the only or preferred career path.

Another key message from this study is that, if you seek a community college presidency or chief instructional position, it may well require movement to another college to attain that goal (Chart VI). The phenomena of hiring top officials from outside the college is in sharp contrast to private business. One study I reviewed indicated that in the private sector, by a 3-1 ratio, top positions are filled by internal candidates. Why there would be such a contrast is a subject for interesting speculation.

To sum up the data so far, teaching is still a common career starting point for many top community college officials. There is not, however, a single preferred career track. People planning to move into high level administrative positions must obtain a doctoral degree and anticipate a move to another college at some point as they move up the administrative ladder.

Once they obtained their positions in midwestern community colleges, what training, experience or skills did this group of college leaders wish they had gotten along the way? Chart VII contains the responses to that question. Because of the open-ended questions which produced this data, frequency of responses and percentages were not calculated, but the subject areas are arranged in a rough descending order of frequency of responses.

Community college officials understood the philosophical issues in their jobs, but were much less well prepared to understand the operational side of the college: computers, budgeting, planning and legal issues. In short, these officials desired more management and operational skills.

CHART VI

CAREER LADDER DATA

1. CAME TO CURRENT JOB FROM OUTSIDE INSTITUTION (71%)

2. FIRST JOB IN EDUCATION: TEACHING (62%)

3. TRADITIONAL VIEW OF CAREER PATH NOT ACCURATE (LESS THAN 50%)

CHART VII

HOW TO PREPARE FOR TOP ADMINISTRATIVE JOBS

1. MORE MANAGEMENT SKILLS
   - COMPUTERS
   - FINANCE
   - PLANNING
   - LEGAL ISSUES
   - ACCOUNTING
   - LABOR RELATIONS

2. MORE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SKILLS
   - UNDERSTANDING OTHERS' BEHAVIOR
   - HOW TO MOTIVATE PEOPLE
   - HOW TO HELP PEOPLE CHANGE
   - UNDERSTANDING BOARDS, THE COMMUNITY, LEGISLATORS

3. HOW TO ASSESS THE CURRICULA AND MAKE CHANGES WHERE NEEDED

4. LEARN FROM PRACTITIONERS (INTERNSHIPS, MENTORING, EXTENSION PROGRAMS, FIELD TRIPS, GUEST LECTURES)

The second most frequently mentioned area for improvement was people skills. College officials noted the need to better understand how to work with people and how to get people to work with them. There were also several responses that emphasized these skills should be developed through direct contact with people with practical experience in college operations, rather than relying on university courses for exposure.

The message from community college officials contacted in this study concerning how to prepare for similar positions suggests a balance of knowledge and skills between a good educational philosophy and practical knowledge of how to administer a college. This advice is consistent with the practical realities of increasingly tight public financing and the need for community colleges to be both effective and efficient in the future.

In the next ten years, many vacancies will occur in community colleges as faculty and staff who were hired during the rapid growth years of the 50's and 60's reach retirement age. Community colleges face the substantial challenge of finding good people to fill those vacancies. The goal of this presentation was to offer some career planning and skill building advice from current practitioners to those who are contemplating career advancement or who counsel with others considering future career plans. It is hoped that this advice will be useful planning information that can be considered and acted on now so that, when that attractive presidency becomes vacant, the necessary skills and experience will be in place to get and succeed in the job.

ERIC Clearinghouse for
Junior Colleges
NOV 09 1990